

Message Text

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CAPE TOWN 0365

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, WA

SUBJECT: SWAPO TRIALS

REF: A) CAPE TOWN 0353; B) CAPE TOWN 0350

C) CAPE TOWN 0342; D) PRETORIA 3147

1. TRIAL OF SWAPO YOUTH LEAGUE CHAIRMAN EZRIEL TAAPOPI AND ACTING SECRETARY JOSEPH KASHEA IS CONTINUING AND IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED JULY 26. AS WE NOTED PREVIOUSLY, JUDGE PRESIDENT BADENHORST IS EXPECTED TO RESERVE HIS DECISION UNTIL LATER DATE.

2. BRITISH LAWYER CEDRIC THORNBERRY CONTINUING AS OBSERVER IN BEHALF OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND LAWYERS' COMMITTEE. GERMAN CONSUL KREMER ALSO ATTENDING. OBSERVERS FROM BRITISH AND SWEDISH EMBASSIES, AS WELL AS EMBASSY POLITICAL OFFICER TIERNEY, LEFT WINDHOEK TODAY (THEY DEPARTED BEFORE CONCLUSION OF TRIAL BECAUSE NO AIRLINE BOOKINGS AVAILABLE DURING NEXT FEW DAYS).

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3. SENTENCING OF THOMAS KAMATI, ANOTHER SWAPO DETAINEE, SCHEDULED FOR JULY 29. KAMATI HAD BEEN HELD FOR FIVE MONTHS AND WAS CHARGED, UPON RELEASE, FOR DEFACING PUBLIC PROPERTY, I.E. HAVING WRITTEN ON HIS CELL WALL (REF D). HE SPENT MOST OF DETENTION PERIOD IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT. DEFENSE LAWYERS WILL ATTEMPT TO HAVE HIS GUILTY PLEA SET ASIDE. THEY INTEND TO ATTACK SYSTEM OF DETENTION BY INTRODUCING EVIDENCE FROM PSYCHOLOGISTS ALLEGING SERIOUS DETRIMENTAL EFFECT LONG PERIOD OF ISOLATION HAS HAD ON MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH OF PRISONERS.

4. TRIAL OF SWAPO NATIONAL CHAIRMAN DAVID MERORO IS SCHEDULED SEPTEMBER 3. MERORO CHARGED UNDER SUPPRESSION OF COMMUNISM ACT FOR POSSESSION OF LITERATURE PUBLISHED BY BANNED SA COMMUNIST PARTY (REF C). ACCORDING TO DEFENSE LAWYERS, MERORO WAS MISTREATED DURING HIS SIX-MONTHS DETENTION. MERORO HAS TOLD THEM THAT HE WAS HUNG BY WRISTS FROM CELL WINDOW, FORCED TO STAND FOR LONG PERIODS, AND BEATEN A NUMBER OF TIMES. AS IN KAMATI CASE, DEFENSE LAWYERS PLAN TO ATTACK DETENTION SYSTEM AND SAY THAT MERORO WILL TESTIFY AS TO HIS MALTREATMENT.
HURD

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